Amendments to the Specification:

Add the following new paragraph on page 1, after line 2:

-- CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a divisional of application Serial No. 10/155,256, filed May 24, 2002 in the names of Douglas R. Robello, et al., entitled EXFOLIATED POLYSTYRENE-CLAY NANOCOMPOSITE COMPRISING STAR-SHAPED POLYMER. --